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Moral education to overcome children's moral crisis based on the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW at RA Salsabila

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Abstract

This study explores moral education as a means to address the moral crisis in children, rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, with a case study at RA Salsabila. The research focuses on a child who struggles to adapt to new rules and exhibits dominant behavior towards parents. Using a qualitative method and case study approach, data were collected through observations, interviews, and documentation involving teachers, parents, and the child. The findings show that Islamic values-based moral education plays a significant role in shaping children's character. Strategies such as *uswah hasanah* (exemplary role modeling), worship habituation, and affection-based communication effectively help children internalize social norms and improve behavior. A supportive learning environment and consistent parental involvement in applying Islamic teachings are key factors in fostering moral growth. The study recommends intensified implementation of moral education aligned with the psychological development of children and emphasizes collaboration between teachers, parents, and schools to create an educational ecosystem that nurtures noble character from an early age.

Keywords: Akhlak; moral; early childhood; Qur'an; Sunnah

INTRODUCTION

Education in the Islamic world is currently facing a crisis that has contributed to its overall decline. Educational experts have identified several contributing factors, such as the imbalance in curriculum content, the emergence of socio-cultural crises, the disappearance of role models (*qudwah hasanah*), and the decline of religious values. Moreover, this crisis is believed to stem from a misunderstanding of the nature of human existence, which leads to misperceptions about learners (Werdiningsih, 2022; Akip, 2019).

This educational crisis is not unique to the Islamic world but is also felt globally, including in Indonesia. Various social, political, cultural, economic, and moral challenges have further exacerbated this condition. Despite the growing intellectual achievements among children, a decline in moral development is evident. This moral regression has triggered a crisis in moral education within the national education system, influencing various other societal sectors and accelerating the ongoing moral degradation (Akip, 2019).

The moral crisis continues to persist not only in Indonesia but across the world. A viable solution lies in moral education grounded in the Qur'an and Sunnah—Islam's primary sources for restoring moral values. Historically, when Islam emerged, the Arab society was entrenched in moral decadence, characterized by widespread polytheism, tribal conflicts, oppression of women, inhumane social practices, and institutionalized slavery (Pendidikan Akhlak Berbasis Al-Qur'an dan Sunnah, 2025).

The arrival of Islam, through the revelations of the Qur'an and the prophetic example of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, transformed these moral conditions. As narrated by 'Ā'ishah (raḍiyallāhu 'anhā), the Prophet's character was "the Qur'an," indicating that his conduct was the embodiment of divine teachings (Akip, 2019; Pendidikan Akhlak Berbasis Al-Qur'an dan Sunnah, 2025).

The Qur'an as a guide for life and the Prophet Muhammad as *uswatun ḥasanah* (an excellent role model) provide humanity with enduring solutions to moral challenges from the Prophet's generation to the present day. Accordingly, this article focuses on moral education directly sourced from the Qur'an and Sunnah, which are believed to be capable of addressing deep-rooted moral issues. It is thus incumbent upon rational individuals to return to these primary sources from the Creator as a foundation for moral guidance (Akhlak, Qur, & Dan, 2025).

It is particularly critical to instill morality based on the Qur'an and Sunnah during early childhood, as this stage represents a blank slate—easily shaped by its environment, especially in the midst of a moral crisis.

وَإِذْ قَالَ لُقْمَانُ لِبْنِهِ وَهُوَ يَعِظُهُ يَا بُنَيَّ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ الشِّرْكَ لَظُلْمٌ عَظِيمٌ

"And [mention] when Luqman said to his son while he was instructing him, 'O my son, do not associate [anything] with Allah. Indeed, association [with Him] is great injustice.'" (Qur'an, 31:13)

This verse highlights the necessity of instilling divine values and awareness of consequences in children to develop self-discipline and a sense of moral responsibility.

مُرُوا أَوْلَادَكُمْ بِالصَّلَاةِ وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ سَبْعِ سِنِينَ، وَاصْرِبْهُمْ عَلَيْهَا وَهُمْ أَبْنَاءُ عَشْرِ سِنِينَ، وَفَرِّقُوا بَيْنَهُمْ فِي الْمَضَاجِعِ

"Command your children to pray when they are seven years old, and discipline them if they refuse at the age of ten; and separate their beds." (Abū Dāwūd, No. 495)

This ḥadīth emphasizes the importance of moral education through discipline, order, responsibility, and social boundaries from an early age.

A proper understanding of these teachings reinforces the foundation of *tawḥīd* (monotheism) in moral development. Luqmān's wisdom in beginning moral education by condemning *shirk* reflects the principle that belief in God fosters moral consciousness. A child who understands divine accountability is more likely to develop honesty, responsibility, and avoid deviant behavior.

METHOD

This study employed a qualitative method with a descriptive approach. This method was chosen to gain an in-depth understanding of the implementation of moral education based on the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW in addressing moral crises in children at RA Salsabila. The qualitative descriptive approach enables researchers to explore social phenomena in natural settings and to interpret the meanings individuals ascribe to these phenomena.

Data collection techniques included direct observation, interviews with educators, and document analysis related to the moral learning practices implemented at the institution. Observations were carried out to monitor the daily interactions and learning activities that reflect moral education efforts. Interviews were conducted with class teachers and parents to explore their perspectives and roles in the moral development of children. The documentation process included reviewing institutional records, lesson plans, and other relevant materials that illustrate the values taught.

The data collected were analyzed descriptively to provide a narrative of how Qur'anic and Prophetic values were applied in shaping children's character and preventing moral crises from early childhood. This analysis included coding, categorization, and interpretation of findings in relation to established moral concepts in Islamic education.

Sampling in this study utilized a non-probability, purposive sampling technique. Participants were selected based on specific criteria relevant to the research objectives—namely, children aged 5 to 6 years who exhibited signs of moral crisis, such as difficulty in adhering to rules and dominance over parental authority. The aim of this purposive sampling was to ensure the relevance and richness of the data in addressing the research questions (Akip, 2019).

The research site was RA Salsabila in Purwakarta, focusing on Group B students (aged 5–6 years). The primary subjects of this case study were the class teacher and a student from Group B who demonstrated behavioral issues associated with the moral challenges under investigation.

This methodological design aligns with the principles of Islamic early childhood education, which emphasize holistic development encompassing spiritual, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral dimensions. The integration of Islamic teachings through Qur'anic verses, ḥadīth, and exemplary practices is central to the framework adopted in this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the research conducted at RA Salsabila, Purwakarta demonstrate the tangible impact of habituating moral practices based on the teachings of the Qur'an and Sunnah of the Prophet Muhammad SAW in the school setting. The Group B teacher emphasized the importance of embedding Islamic values in moral education as a strategic measure to resolve children's behavioral challenges. This case study of a six-year-old student illustrates how even seemingly simple aspects of moral education—such as developing independence—can significantly contribute to moral formation.

The child, despite being cognitively well-developed, showed difficulty in performing independent tasks such as dressing and eating. However, his interest in learning these skills from the teacher indicated positive potential and a willingness to improve. This demonstrates that moral education should not be limited to doctrinal

instruction but should encompass practical and behavioral components. The Qur'an and Sunnah strongly emphasize patience, empathy, and consistent guidance in nurturing a child's development—qualities that were evident in the teacher's approach (Akip, 2019).

After participating in learning at RA Salsabila, the child showed progress through involvement in *zuhur* congregational prayer and memorization of short *sūrah*s. These practices reflect the effectiveness of a supportive educational environment rooted in Islamic values. According to the teacher, the school's efforts to create a moral learning atmosphere—through consistent rituals, religious instruction, and peer modeling—greatly influenced the child's transformation.

This finding aligns with the view that a conducive environment plays a crucial role in shaping children's behavior. The child's increased enthusiasm for worship and observable behavioral improvements are examples of how moral education based on Islamic teachings contributes to character development. When children observe and participate in positive behavior modeled by teachers and peers, they are more likely to internalize these values.

Moral education in this context is not limited to the transmission of knowledge but extends to affective and psychomotor domains. The development of independence in self-care, for instance, reflects discipline and personal responsibility, both of which are emphasized in the Sunnah. The Prophet Muhammad SAW regularly guided children with affection and patience, recognizing their developmental stage and responding with appropriate instruction (Pendidikan Akhlak Berbasis Al-Qur'an dan Sunnah, 2025).

The holistic progress seen in the case study, combining cognitive awareness, behavioral adjustments, and spiritual growth, exemplifies the integrated nature of Islamic moral education. The balance of *ilm* (knowledge), *amal* (action), and *akhlāq* (character) is essential in achieving comprehensive moral formation.

Furthermore, the collaboration between teachers and parents in reinforcing Islamic values at home and in school is a determining factor in the child's success. Parental involvement in applying consistent discipline and reinforcing religious practices strengthens the moral lessons taught at school, creating continuity and coherence in the child's moral experience (Werdingasih, 2022).

This case study validates the hypothesis that early childhood is a critical period for moral cultivation, and when Islamic values are integrated through Qur'anic instruction, prophetic traditions, and real-life modeling, children demonstrate positive transformation. As such, educational strategies should be tailored to children's psychological development, ensuring that moral messages are conveyed in a relatable and engaging manner.

CONCLUSION

This case study affirms the pivotal role of moral education rooted in the Qur'an and Sunnah in addressing moral crises in early childhood. The findings illustrate that a holistic and consistent educational approach—one that considers the child's psychological, spiritual, and behavioral development—can result in significant improvements in character and conduct.

The example of a six-year-old student at RA Salsabila demonstrates how moral challenges such as lack of independence and social adjustment can be effectively addressed through a values-based curriculum, positive peer interactions, and active

collaboration between teachers and parents. The integration of worship routines, memorization of Qur'anic verses, and implementation of *uswah ḥasanah* (exemplary behavior) contributed to the child's increasing awareness, discipline, and moral responsibility.

Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of a conducive educational environment in reinforcing moral values. Schools that foster a culture grounded in Islamic teachings can positively shape children's behavior and serve as a model for moral education institutions.

In conclusion, the study supports the need for educational strategies that are deeply embedded in Islamic sources, tailored to children's developmental stages, and reinforced through partnerships between educators and families. Such an ecosystem promotes the internalization of noble character (*akhlāq al-karīmah*) from an early age, thereby preventing moral deterioration and nurturing future generations with strong ethical foundations.

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